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temperature. After washing the gel with 3 liters of acetone, it is dried in air (3 hours at 40°C, then 2 hours at 50°C and 12 hours at 150°C).

IN THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

Claim 19. (Thrice Amended) A process for the preparation of organically modified aerogels with permanently hydrophobic surface groups, comprising:

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- a. introducing a lyogel into a reactor;
 - b. washing the lyogel introduced into the reactor in step a) essentially free of water with an organic solvent;
 - c. surface-silylating the lyogel obtained in step b) with a surface-silylating agent to produce a surface-silylated lyogel; and
 - d. drying the surface-silylated lyogel obtained in step c) to obtain an aerogel,

wherein the surface-silylating agent in step c) comprises a disiloxane of formula I



wherein the residues R, independently of one another, identically or differently, signify in each case a hydrogen atom or a nonreactive organic residue that is linear, branched, cyclic, saturated or unsaturated, or aromatic or heteroaromatic, and wherein, prior to step c), the lyogel is washed with a solution of an orthosilicate capable of bringing about condensation, of formula $R^1_{4-n}Si-(OR^2)_n$ wherein $n = 2$ through 4 and R^1 and R^2 , independently of one another, are hydrogen atoms, linear or branched C_1 - C_4 alkyl residues, cyclohexyl residues or phenyl residues.

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